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T H E
C O V E N A N T
A N D

Confession of Faith,

O F

The CHURCH of CHRIST,

MEETING IN

Blanket-Row, Kingston-upon-Hull.



Printed in the YEAR M.DCC.LXX.

THE
GOVERNMENT

Commission of Enquiry

into the Affairs of the



the Royal Academy of Arts

and the Society of Arts

London

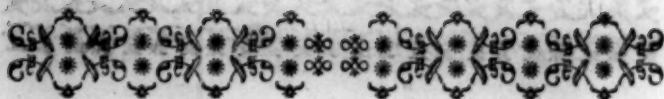
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The COVENANT.

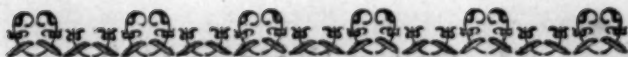
WE, who by Nature were Sinners, ready to perish, having, by the good Spirit and abundant Grace of God, been led to see our dreadful State by Nature, as fallen in Adam, and far from God, and having, we trust, tasted of the Grace of God in converting, promised, and communicated Mercy; we do sincerely, unfeignedly, and without Reserve, desire to give up ourselves unto the Lord and each other, to walk together in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless—to watch over one another in Love—to exhort with Diligence, and rebuke with Meekness and without Partiality—to pray for and seek the Edification of each other in all Things pertaining to Life and Godliness—And this we do in the most solemn and serious Manner, having sought the Divine Presence amongst us, and called for the Blessings of our Covenant God to distill upon us. And as a further Testimony we do subscribe the same with our Hands, agreeable to the Prediction of Gospel Times: *One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the Name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his Hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the Name of Israel.* Isaiah xliv. 5.



INTRODUCTION.

THE frequent Exhortations which we meet with in the Scripture to Unity of Faith and Sentiment, together with the exprefs Command we have to contend earnestly for it, as once delivered to the Saints, leads us to conclude the Necessity there is, that in every Church of Christ, formed on a Gospel-Plan, there should be a regular, methodical, and scriptural Confession of the Faith of that Society; because it is impossible there should be a united Contention for the Faith, if there is not a united Profession of it. Besides, it seems to have been the Apostolick Method, to recommend this to the several Churches which they visited, Rom. vi. 17. *Ye have obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered you*; and to Timothy (said by some to have been the first Bishop or Pastor of the Church at Ephesus) he says, 2 Tim. i. 13. *Hold fast the Form of sound Words, which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus*. We do, therefore, receive the whole Word of God as the Rule of our Faith, and the Test of our Experience; but that we may be more particular, we may reduce it to the following Heads.

The



The Confession of Faith.

I. Of the Being of a God.

WE believe; that there is a God, the Creator of all Things and the Supporter of the same; a Spirit without human Members, Parts or Passions; infinite, eternal, and unchangeable—Giving Being to all Things, but receiving it from none—Evident in all Places, yet seen by no Eye—Moving all Things, yet never moved—Present in all Places, yet no where confined; and that there is such a Being, Nature teaches, Reason approves, and the Scripture affirms. Heb. xi. 6. Prov. ix. 10.

II. Of the Persons in the Godhead.

IN the Godhead we believe there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; none is before or after the other, being equal, possessing the same Nature and Attributes, conjoining in the same Works, equal in Glory, Power, and Love. These divine Persons, before all Time, entered into a sacred Covenant, to save and restore a Remnant of the Children of Men from Misery, to eternal Happiness, and from Death to Life.

We call them Persons, because the Scripture ascribes Understanding and Will to each of them. Matt. xxviii. 19. 1 John v. 7.

III. Of the Word of God.

WE believe, that God reveals himself in the Law of Nature, and the Works of Creation, sufficiently for the rendering every sinful Creature inexcusable; but, of his abundant Mercy, he has given us a more clear Discovery of himself and of ourselves in the Book of Scripture, which was spoke at different Times and in divers Manners by the Prophets and other Messengers. This we receive as his Word; by this we try all Doctrines; this we embrace as the Rule of our Faith; and from this we hope to receive our Comfort when Heart and Flesh fail us.

We further believe, that the Canon of Scripture is now complete, that no Additions need, or ought to be made to it, nor any Thing to be taken from it. 2 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. i. 1.

IV. Of Election, &c.

WE believe, that God, from all Eternity, by the most wise and holy Council of his Will, did freely and unchangeably fore-ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, that God is neither the Author of Sin, nor is any Violence put on the Will of the Creature. By his Decree, God fixed upon a Remnant of Mankind, of his own pure, free, and sovereign Mercy, whom he hath fore-ordained to receive Grace in Time—be made a happy People—preserved to the End—and obtain everlasting Life through Jesus Christ, in whom they are chosen. And when God conferred this
high

high Favour on this Remnant, according to the Election of Grace, he left others in that State in which they were considered as fallen; so that, in consequence of their going on in Sin, they will become Monuments for the Glory of his Justice. Eph. i. 4. Rom. viii. 30.

V. Of Providence.

WE believe, that God, who hath created all Things by his Power and Wisdom, doth also, by his superintending Hand, uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all Creatures and all their Actions, by his holy and wise Providence; and that he, by his immutable Council, directs the most minute Things to the Praise and Glory of his Wisdom, Power, Justice, Goodness and Mercy. Eph. i. 11. Psal. ciii. 19.

VI. Of the Fall.

WE believe, that God, having created Man, did enter into a Covenant with him, called *the Covenant of Works*, or *the Covenant of Nature*, in which Life was promised on his Obedience, but Deaths, of all Kinds, denounced on his Disobedience; he being seduced by the Subtilty of Satan, did wilfully transgress the Law of Creation, and break the Covenant by eating of the forbidden Fruit.

Nor was this a private Evil; all Mankind descending from him by the ordinary Course, have, in Consequence of this, lost Fellowship with God—are dead in Sin—and wholly defiled in the Faculties

ties and Powers both of Soul and Body. From this Fountain, or Original Sin, all Iniquity, Calamities, Disorders, Pain and Death do naturally flow; so that no Man, since the Fall, can restore himself to Fellowship and Communion with God by the Covenant of Works. Rom. v. 17, 18, 19. Job xiv. 4.

VII. Of Christ the Mediator.

WE believe, that it pleased God, in his eternal Purpose, to choose, ordain and appoint the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person in the blessed Trinity, to be the only Mediator between him and his People. Into his Hands the Elect were delivered to be redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified. In the Fullness of Time he took on him our Nature, being God and Man in one Person; and this he did willingly and of free Choice. In this Nature he died as a Ransom, Sacrifice, and Atonement for his People, thereby he fulfilled the Law and satisfied Justice. And in that Nature he rose from the Dead—is gone into Heaven as the Head, Representative and Intercessor of his People, to see that all the Effects of his Undertaking be applied to them, in the Time stipulated in the everlasting Covenant. 1 Tim. iii. 16. John i. 1, 2, 3. 14.

VIII. Of Effectual-Calling.

WE believe, that God, of his free Grace, doth in an effectual Manner call this Number chosen in Christ, powerfully enlightening their Minds in
divine

divine Things—taking away the stony Heart—renewing their Wills, and effectually drawing them to Christ; yet so that they come freely; by Grace being made willing to cast themselves upon him. Psalm cx. 3. Jude i.

IX. Of Justification.

WE believe, that those whom God calls by his Spirit he justifies by his Grace, not by infusing Righteousness into them, but by imputing unto and enabling them to receive, embrace and rest upon the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, who is therefore called *the Lord our Righteousness*; so that they trust to his active Obedience to the Law, and passive Obedience in his Death, as performed in their Room and Stead. Thus they, by Faith (which is also given by God himself) receive Remission of all their Sins, and believe that there is no Condemnation, because Christ, by the one Oblation of himself once offered, has obtained a free and full Pardon for them. Rom. v. 1. Rom. viii. 1.

X. Of Adoption.

WE believe, that to those whom he justifies he grants the high Liberty, Dignity, and Privileges of his Children, adopting them into his Family, giving them Access to his Throne, enabling them to claim their Relation to him as a Father, believing that he will pity, protect, and provide for them, and will never cast them off, but seal them to the Day of Redemption. John i. 12. Gal. iv. 4—7.

XI. Of

XI. Of Sanctification.

WE believe, that whom he justifies he also sanctifies, and this in granting them a new Heart. It is a real and personal Change; Lust is subdued—the old Man mortified—every Grace quickened—Holiness prevails, it spreads throughout the Man; and yet is perfect in no Man on this Side the Grave; so that in sanctified Souls there is a perpetual War between the Flesh and Spirit. 2 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2.

XII. Of Good Works.

WE believe, that Good Works are the necessary and inseparable Fruits of true Faith, evidencing our Sonship and Love to God; we believe, we are ordained to the Performance of Good Works, yet not saved for or by them, as our best Duties are insufficient for our Acceptance, yea, they are as filthy Rags, and therefore cannot justify. And we further believe, that the Doctrines of Election, Effectual-Calling, Justification, Adoption, Perseverance, &c. are so far from tending to give Liberty in the Ways of Sin, that all those who really believe them, will find that they are the grand Spring to universal Obedience, and the more we look to, and depend upon those precious Truths, the more honourable our Lives and Conversation will be, to the Glory of our heavenly Father.

Those Doctrines may be abused by those who have them in Notion, but not at Heart; but this does

does not overturn the Truth and Importance of them, but confirms it. The Bee and the Spider may apply at the same Flower, the one to extract the balmy Honey, the other to draw the deadly Poison; but none will root up the blooming Rose from their Garden, because it is abused. So these Doctrines are to be preached and believed, and those that abuse them do it to their own Destruction, while those who believe them, will find they tend to establish and confirm them in the good Ways of God. Eph. ii. 10. Tit. ii. 11, 12.

XIII. Of Perseverance.

WE believe, that the Elect, being chosen and justified in Christ, called and sanctified by the Spirit, can never fall totally and finally from Grace, but be preserved by constant Supplies—be led by God to their Journey's End—and be eternally saved through the Merits of Jesus Christ; because this depends not upon our Mutability, but the Immutability of God, the Oath of the Father, the Intercession of the Son, the Supplies of the Spirit, and the Promises of the Gospel. Rom. viii. 35. 1 Pet. i. 5.

XIV. Of the Law of God.

WE believe, that this can be performed by no sinful Creature, so as to obtain Life and Righteousness by it; yet it is a Rule of Life to all Believers (as it is viewed in the Hand of Christ) although we are not under it as a Covenant of Works. Psal. cxix. 96. Gal. iii. 21.

XV. Of

XV. Of the Sacraments.

WE believe, these are holy Signs and significant
 Seals of the Covenant of Grace; although
 they do not confer Grace, yet they strengthen it.
 There are only two instituted by Christ in the
 Church, viz. Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.
 The former is an Act of Dedication, wherein and
 whereby Believers give up their Infant-Seed to the
 Lord, supplicating Grace for them, that they may
 be sprinkled with the Blood of Jesus, as they are
 in this Ordinance emblematically with Water.
 They do hereby acknowledge that their Children
 are born in Sin, and profess their Faith in a Tri-une
 God. This Ordinance is to be administred but
 once. The Lord's Supper is a perpetual Remem-
 brance of the Suffering and Death of Christ for
 his People, emblematically signifying their Com-
 munion with him, their Necessity of receiving
 from him all Supplies of Grace, Faith, &c. It is
 a fresh Act of Dedication, wherein the Partici-
 pants give up themselves to Christ as their King
 and Head. Each of the Elements are to be re-
 ceived, and that frequently, to strengthen our
 Faith, confirm our Hope, and testify our Love to
 the Brethren. Acts ii. 38. *Then Peter said unto
 them, Μετανοήσατε, και βαπτισθήτω ενανος υμων, Repent
 ye, and let every one among st you be baptized.* 1 Cor.
 11. 26.

XVI. Of

XVI. Of the Power of the Church.

WE believe, that the Power of the Keys is lodged in the Hands of the Church, *i.e.* that Admissions, Reproofs, and Excommunications, are to be directed by it; and yet it is needful to have Officers in the Church for the Well-being thereof; but yet the Church doth not give away its Authority into the Hands of the said Officers, but they (the Officers) as their Constituents and Representatives, are to be the Mouth of the Church in executing their Determinations. The choosing, calling, and ordaining of these Officers, is the sole Right and Privilege of the Men Communicants of the Church, of whose Number they must be Members before they are constituted Officers. Matt. xviii. 18. Acts vi. 3.

XVII. Of Church-Officers.

WE believe, that every Church of Christ should have a Pastor, Bishop, or Elder, to go before them in the Service of the Sanctuary; and also Deacons to serve Tables, take Care of the Poor, and attend to the temporal Concerns of the Church. The Number of those, agreeable to the Size or Duty of the Church to which they minister; yet these Officers, viz. Pastor and Deacons, in Church-Acts, have no Right to set aside any Determination made by the Majority of the Church, having a Voice in those Acts only as Brethren. Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. totum.

XVIII. Of

XVIII. Of the State of Man at Death.

WE believe, that in consequence of Sin, it is appointed for all Men once to die, their Bodies return to the Dust and are changed, but the Soul, having a spiritual and immortal Subsistence, neither dies, sleeps, nor is impaired, but returns immediately to God, as the Judge by whom it is ordered to its fixed State, till the Morning of the Resurrection. Eccles. xii. 7. Heb. ix. 27.

XIX. Of the Judgment.

WE believe, a Day is appointed in which all the Dead being raised, every Particle of Dust being built up, and the Soul united unto it, Jesus, the Judge, will then pronounce a most equitable Sentence on each Individual, whereby he will manifest the Glory of his Mercy and Justice, after which he will take his People Home, and send his Enemies to reap the Reward of their Sins in the Prison of Hell. Acts xvii. 31. Rev. xx. 12.

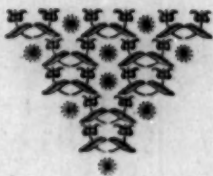
XX. Of the After-State.

WE believe, that the Righteous will be dignified with everlasting Life and Happiness in the Vision of God—the beholding of Christ—the Company of Angels, and the Converse of Saints—Sin will be removed—Sorrow banished, and they free from the Fear of losing their happy Station, being forever

forever locked in from the Danger of a Fall. Matt. xxv. 34.

On the other Hand, the Wicked will dwell in the Lake of Fire, and the Company of Devils, through an ever-rolling Eternity; for as their Sin is against the Eternal Majesty, his Justice must smother against them forever, because there is no Way (at least revealed to us) to turn away his Wrath from them. Matt. xxv. 41.

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forever locked in the *Dragon of a Fall*. *Marie*
XXV. 84. On the other hand, the Wicked will dwell in
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